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Statement by
Senator George McGovern (D-S.D.)

During nine hours of conversation with Prime Minister Fidel Castro on a mission to Cuba in early May of this year, the issue of CIA-inspired assassination efforts against Cuban leaders was discussed. Mr. Castro told me that the CIA was involved in a number of efforts to assassinate him and other Cuban leaders. He also said that there had been scores of harassment attacks on the Cuban coast organized by the CIA from boats operating at sea.

I asked Mr. Castro if he would prepare a report for me on these incidents which he agreed to do. That report has now been transmitted to my office.

The documentation supplied by Prime Minister Castro came in the form of a large carefully prepared volume which I am turning over to the Select Committee on Intelligence. It includes a text in both Spanish and English, plus photographs of the captured conspirators and their weapons.

I have no way to verify these allegations. But if they are true, the CIA has engaged in the most shocking, murderous, and unAmerican behavior against the leaders of a neighboring state. I find such behavior a complete contradiction of the principles on which our nation was founded.

The material describes 24 incidents, ranging from mid-1960 to March of 1971. It does not profess to be inclusive; rather, it focuses on the "majority" of attempts against the Cuban government which have "not been publicly known." The text of the Cuban report cites the inquiries of the Rockefeller Commission and the Church Committee, and mentions as "very significant" the information published by columnist Jack Anderson about various plots involving gangster John Rosselli.

In most cases the evidence involves schemes to assassinate Prime Minister Castro. The most recent was a plan for an assassin to pose as a Venezuelan newsman covering Castro's 1971 visit to Chile. The gun was to be concealed in a television camera. The assassin, Jesus Dominguez Benitz, known as "The Islander," had been arrested by the FBI in 1968 for promoting terrorism in the United States. He was arrested again in 1970 by authorities at Guantanamo Naval Base, but was nonetheless free to participate just months later in an attempt on Castro's life.

Before 1971, the most recent incident cited was in 1967. The material lists one or more attempts in every year from 1960 to 1967.

The Cubans link the CIA to a wide range of anti-Castro groups both inside Cuba and elsewhere. They attribute to the CIA consistent efforts to consolidate counterrevolutionary organizations into such umbrella groups as the United Resistance, Union for United Revolutionaries, and Anticommunist Civic Resistance, and to create the impression of widespread opposition to Castro inside Cuba. Approved For Release 2004/11/29 : CIA-RDP77M00144R000500140039-3

The CIA is also listed as the source of training and equip-

The Cubans accuse former officials at Guantanamo Naval Base of providing a haven for violent anti-Castro groups and of supplying weapons for anti-Castro attempts.

In at least two cases they suggest that attacks on Guantanamo were self-inflicted, with the aim of winning support for military action against Cuba. They suggest further that the CIA collaborated with counterrevolutionary Cubans to plot subversive action against other Latin American countries, in the expectation that Cuba would be blamed.

Weaponry supplied by the CIA, as pictured in the material, covers the spectrum all the way from small handguns and poison to high-powered rifles with telescopic lenses, machine guns, hand grenades, grenade launchers, TNT, plastic explosives, bazookas, and even mortars.

Targets in addition to Castro were President Osvaldo Torrado, Deputy Prime Minister Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, Defense Minister Raul Castro, and Foreign Minister Raul Roa. The plot against Roa, uncovered in early 1962, was part of a broad plan to kill him first and then attack other leaders when they attended the funeral. It was designated "Plan Z."

The material supplied by the Cuban authorities obviously warrants further investigation by the appropriate committees in the Senate and the House and by the Executive Branch. Conclusions on CIA involvement are apparently based on confessions and on circumstantial evidence. But at the very least, Prime Minister Castro has supplied important leads which must be pursued.

We already have substantial information about the content of U.S. policy during the period covered by this material. Publicly, United States policy after the missile crisis of 1962 was to discourage and prevent U.S. based violence against the Castro government.

We are forced to consider the possibility that those declarations masked the exact opposite. At some time we must also consider the appalling prospect that the CIA was involved in assassination attempts in Cuba entirely on its own, and perhaps in direct defiance of higher authority.

If that is the case then we have suffered abuses a free society simply cannot tolerate. We must spare no effort in learning the full truth, in identifying those responsible, and in developing ways to assure that this can never happen again.

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The United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) has played the leading role in the history of the aggressions against Cuba, promoting, organizing, financing, and, in many cases, directing vandalic actions, not only against the Cuban territory, but also against our representations and interest in foreign countries, or in international waters.

In this wide variety of activities carried out by the CIA and by other United States subversive bodies against our country, the reiterated plans toward the physical elimination, of the principal leaders of the Revolution, and specially, against our Primer Minister, stand out because of their dangerousness.

The proofs we provide, evidence that, since 1959, this has been one of its major aims, by using the most varied technical precision methods. In the case of agents living abroad, they have been given means of transportation and communication.

It is worth noticing that, in the innumerable infiltrations organized by the CIA, using members of counterrevolutionary organizations, one of the permanent goals has also been the physical elimination of Commander in Chief, Fidel Castro Ruz.

The CIA, in order to carry out its plans, has used counterrevolutionary individuals inside and outside the country. It has had as collaborators, not only those who had been shifted from power, but also individuals of different social origins, including samples of all types of viciousness.

In the same way, they have had no objection to recruiting well-known leaders and members from the American maffia, to whom they have barred their offences, in exchange for their participation in the plots against our leaders.

Nor have they hesitated in trying to carry out their actions in public places, where the number of innocent victims would have been incalculable, as were the crimes planned to take place at the Latin American Stadium, the Revolution Square and the University of Havana.

During the last month, the American press has published an increasing and extensive information about the accomplishment of these activities, offering details about the participation of the Central Intelligence Agency in the elaboration and execution of the criminal plans.

(more)

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In the reports of the so-called Rockefeller Commission, as well as the one headed by Senator Frank Church, for the researches on the illegal activities of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), all what we have stated above, has been undoubtedly demonstrated.

A former agent made public statements about the participation of this Agency in the criminal act carried out against the French steamship "La Coubre", where more than one hundred Cubans were killed and about 200 were seriously injured. He offers details about his accomplishments trying to "justify" this killing by blaming a slight damage in the mechanism of the blowing equipment which was used.

Very significant is the information given by the journalist Jack Anderson from "The Washington Post" about the gangster John Rosselli's participation in various plots against Prime Minister Fidel Castro, some of them by means of poisoning, with pills handed to him by the CIA. Afterwards, according to the American press itself, Rosselli, before the Senate Intelligence Commission, conceded having participated with this Agency in various plots for assassinating the Cuban Prime Minister.

Gradually, officials, Senators, chiefs, officers and former CIA agents, as well as well-known American press journalists, have made categorical statements, which coincide with the denounces expressed, apropos, by the Cuban Government.

Without pretending to mention all the plots attempted, we expose some of them the majority of which have not been publicly known. They prove the diversity and recurrence of the CIA as well as other subversive agencies participation in these actions:

CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY
OF CUBAN ALLEGATIONS

- (1) Mid-1960, "La Cruz" counterrevolutionary group, Tauler Sague, a "ganster," and Cubria Ramos were infiltrated through Punta Hicacos zone in Matanzas Province for a plot against Castro and other terrorism and sabotage. TNT, revolvers, and automatic pistols, a high-powered rifle, and large quantities of ammunition were supplied by the CIA.
- (2) March, 1961, various counterrevolutionary groups were trained and armed by the CIA, and infiltrated through the north of Havana, to assassinate Castro and support the Bay of Pigs invasion. Humberto Sori Marin and four other individuals were infiltrated to coordinate the activities of various counterrevolutionary groups directed by the CIA inside Cuba. Weaponry included automatic weapons, high-powered rifles with scopes, ammunition, and explosives.
- (3) June, 1961, the "Frente Revolucionario Democratico" (FRD) met with individual infiltrated into Cuba with instructions for a plot against Castro. Jeeps with bazookas were placed in a garage at an intersection in Havana and a truck with grenades was placed in sports city. Plan was to ambush Castro and other leaders. Two participants -- Guillermo Caula Ferrer and Higinio Menendez -- said when arrested that the CIA was in charge, and that contact was maintained through Guantanamo and the Swiss Embassy.

In July, 1961, after Bay of Pigs, CIA worked to consolidate counterrevolutionary groups into the "Unidad Resistencia" (United Resistance) organization. Jose Pujals Mederos made an undercover visit to the United States to meet with CIA officers Jim Bender (or Boulding), Harold Bishop and Carl Hitch. There Mederos was appointed head of CIA operations in Cuba in place of the arrested Aldredo Izaguirre. Programs included "selfaggression" against Guantanamo to justify counter-attacks on other countries to provoke war against Cuba.

- (4) July 26, 1961, through the infiltration of CIA agents Emilio Adolfo Rivero Caro (Brand), Adolfo Mendoza (Raul) and Jorge Garcia Rubio (Tony) and others, the United Resistance group developed a plot against Castro during the 26th of July celebration in Oriente Province.
- (5) July 26, 1961, the same group planned another plot the same day against Castro during a rally at Revolution Square. Meetings were held at the Guantanamo Naval Base, where war material, including large quantities of small arms, was supplied by base commander Captain Carl E. Schenweilas.
- (6) Also in July, 1961, plotting against Castro was undertaken by representatives of "30 de Noviembre," "Movimiento Revolucionario del Pueblo," and "Frente Revolucionario Democratico." The assassination attempt was to be carried out near the home of Celiz Sanchez Manduley in Vedado. CIA instructions came through contacts abroad with Tony Varona, Manuel Ray and Aureliano Sanchez Arango, and through Admiral Burke and CIA agents on Guantanamo. Weapons included explosives, mortars, high-powered rifles, and 30-caliber machine guns.
- (7) September 13, 1961, the same groups listed in (6) above, in contact with the "Movimiento de Recuperacion Revolucionaria" (MRR), led by Juan Jose Martore Silva, made an attempt on the life of Dr. Carlos Rafael Rodriguez when he was returning from Matanzas to Havana. They worked with a CIA agent in Matanzas and a counterrevolutionary band there. Weapons included automatic handguns, machine guns, and a high-powered rifle with telescopic site.
- (8) October 4, 1961, the MRR and "El Frente del Escambray," under CIA direction, agreed upon a plan for sabotage in Havana, timed to coincide with the return of Cuban President Osvaldo Torrado from Punta del Este. A bazooka was to be fired toward the President at the former presidential palace from a nearby apartment building, with the withdrawal covered by launching grenades against the public. Weapons recovered included automatic rifles and grenade launchers.

- (9) In early 1962, with CIA instructions through Guantanamo, Jorge Luis Cuervo Calvo reorganized several groups into the "Union de Unidades Revolucionarias" (UDUR). A meeting was held to plan an uprising and discuss arrangements which had been made to receive equipment through Guantanamo. CIA was pressing both attempts against Castro and staged acts of aggression against Guantanamo. Calvo outlined "Plan Z" -- a scheme to kill Foreign Minister Raul Roa, and then attack other Cuban leaders who would attend the burial. "The authors" of the plan are listed as Cay Hernandez and Cay Gispert and members of the DRE organization headed by Julio Hernandez Rojo, listed as a CIA agent infiltrated into Cuba. Weaponry included a double-barreled shotgun, explosives, grenades, and demolition timing devices, one labeled "Block Demolition, M5 A1."

In 1963 another consolidation of groups was carried out with CIA direction from abroad through agent Nino Diaz. The umbrella group was "Resistencia Civica Anticomunista" (RCA), and it incorporated the "Ejercito de Liberacion Nacional" (ELN), "Movimiento de Recuperacion Revolucionaria" (MRR), and "Agrupacion Montecristi," among others. The overall objective, as instructed by the CIA, was to create the impression of a strong internal resistance to Castro, and to inspire a decision for armed intervention at the meeting of OAS presidents. Again, instructions came through Guantanamo.

- (10) March 13, 1963, the RCA initiated a plan to assassinate Castro from a house near the University of Havana, by firing a mortar. People arrested included Samuel Carballo Moreno, identified as a CIA agent. Attacks were to be made simultaneously on the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution and on National Revolutionary Militia sites. Bazookas, mortars and machine guns were taken.
- (11) April 7, 1963, the RCA developed a plan involving sixteen men armed with pistols and fragmentation grenades, who were to attack Castro at the Latin American Stadium. Those arrested were Enrique Rodriguez Valdes (known as "Mulgado"), Ricardo Lopez Cabrera, Onorio Torres Perdomo, and Jorge Carlos Espinosa Escarles.
- (12) July 26, 1963, the RCA grouping planned to assassinate the Minister of the Armed Forces, Raul Castro, at Revolution Square during the 26th of July celebration. Leading those groups involved in the plot was Ibrahim Machin Hernandez.
- (13) September 28, 1963, another group was formed through a relationship with CIA agent Pierre Owen Diez de Ure, who was a French citizen living in Cuba. Their plan was to dynamite sewage pipes under the presidential palace. de Ure confessed that he had been working for and giving information to the CIA for a period of two years.
- (14) March, 1964, a plan to assassinate Castro by Mario Salabarría Aguiar, a "gangster," who had contacts with the CIA through its agent Dr. Bernardo Milanes Lopez, who sought support in Spain from Tony Varona and Juan Bosch, listed as friends of Salabarría. The CIA gave Salabarría weapons and "great sums of money" for a scheme which involved installing a 30 or 50 caliber machine gun in a vehicle and waiting for Castro to pass by.
- (15) Mid-1964, another plan to assassinate Castro was formulated by members of "Movimiento de Liberacion Nacional," part of the RCA block controlled by the CIA. The effort involved CIA agents Alberto and Ramon Grau Sierra, members of a network headed by Ramon and Maria Leopoldina Grau Alsina, who attempted to poison Castro in 1965. The mid-1964 plan called for throwing grenades at Castro at the Latin American Stadium. Nine men were involved.

September, 1964, members of "Ejercito de Liberacion Nacional" (ELN) and "Frente Interno de Liberacion" (FIL), who had been engaged in intelligence for the CIA, began, under CIA instructions, to seek unification.

- (16) One of the members of this group, Mamesio Cubillas Perez, told Angel Miguel Arencibia Viran, Rolando Galdos Ranzola and others of a plot against Castro to occur at 11 St. Vedado.
- (17) In early 1965, counterrevolutionaries Julio Omar Cruz Cecilia, Fermin Gonzalez Carballo and Giraldo Reynaldo Diego Solano -- members of an RCA sub-group known as "Ejercito de Liberacion Nacional" -- were working on a plot against Castro in Santiago de las Vegas. This plan was dropped in favor of a plan to hit Castro at the Latin American Stadium, with another group in a nearby building set up to fire machine guns into the crowd to create panic and facilitate the escape.
- (18) In June, 1965, there was an arrest of the group headed by Ramon and Maria Leopoldina Grau Alsina (see (15) above), which was part of the "Rescate" and "Movimiento Anticomunista Revolucionario" (MAR) groups sponsored by the CIA. Maria Leopoldina Grau had received CIA instructions for poisoning Castro at the Havana Libre Hotel. Jesus Companioni Souza and Santos de la Caridad Perez Nunez, members of MAR, were to carry out the poisoning. When this attempt failed, another 500 capsule bottle of poison was sent by Tony Varona. Maria Alsina, also known as "Polita," also received weapons with silencers and special assassination projectiles from the CIA.
- (19) In July of 1965, there was an arrest of a group which represented another CIA attempt to organize counterrevolutionaries, this time under the name "Unidad Resistencia." This group developed a plan to assassinate Castro with a Thompson submachine gun at Vita Nouva's restaurant, firing also at the Ministry of Interior across the street to create confusion and permit the escape. Equipment included weapons and communications gear.
- (20) Also in 1965, there was an arrest of former Cuban commander Rolando Cubela Secades. Cubela was recruited during a trip to Madrid by CIA agents Manuel Artime, Jorge Robreno ("The Magician"), Luis Enrique Trasancos, and Carlos Tepedino. The planning also involved an official at the Cuban Embassy in Madrid, Jose Luis Gonzales Gallarreta, and Alberto Blanco (or "El Loco"). In Madrid, Artime promised boats, weapons and men for an invasion of Cuba within 72 hours to support the assassination of Castro. Before returning to Cuba, Cubela received from Gallarreta a rifle with a telescopic site and silencer.
- (21) In mid-1965, two groups with CIA connections and contacts in the United States, the "Comandos L" and the "Movimiento 30 de Noviembre," planned to infiltrate Cuba. That effort was given up, and instead they fired from gunboats at the "scholarship zone" in Miramar and at the Riveria Hotel. in the direction of the presidential residence.
- (22) In May, 1966, these same groups were infiltrated into the Monte Barreto zone in Havana with the mission of assassinating Castro. In the action Armando Romero Martinez and Sandalio Herminio Diaz Garcia were killed, and Antonio Cuesta Valle -- head of "Comandos L", and Eugenio Enrique Zaldivar Cardenas were arrested. These men had been trained in Puerto Rico by the CIA, and some had been involved in the bombardment of the "San Pascual," a merchant vessel anchored at the Caibarien Port in Las Villas Province.
- (23) On March 17, 1967, three infiltrators from the United States -- Felix Asencio Crespo, Wilfredo Martinez Diaz, and Gustavo Aroces Alvarez -- were arrested while attempting to land by Cayo Frago. Their planned activity was to assassinate Castro and conduct systematic sabotage to create the image of a popular uprising, to help counterrevolutionary groups in the United States get official backing. These people had been trained by the CIA through "M-30-11," "RECE," "Los Pinos Nuevos," "Comandos L," "Alpha-66," and other organizations. They had automatic rifles, boats, plastic explosives, and communications equipment.

- (24) In 1971, a plan was prepared to assassinate Castro on a visit to Chile. The main protagonist was Jesus Dominguez Benitez, known as "The Islander," who had been arrested by the FBI in 1968 for promoting terrorist actions inside the United States. In 1970 he had participated in an unsuccessful attempt to infiltrate Cuba through Oriente Province and had sought refuge at Guantanamo, where he was arrested for bond violation. Nonetheless, he was free in 1971, to participate with the CIA, Chilean fascists, and Cuban counterrevolutionaries in a scheme to assassinate Castro using a gun concealed in a television camera. He obtained Venezuelan press credentials from Cuban exiles in that country. The plan was aborted. Those involved in the plot feared for their lives because the plan did not insure their escape.

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CLOSING STATEMENT FROM CUBA DOCUMENT

We consider that the analysis of the informations we offer, the publicly known, and the ones that the American authorities possess and have not been published, allows us to affirm that the physical elimination of Cuban Revolutionary leaders, especially the Prime Minister Fidel Castro Ruz, has been a reiterated policy of the United States through its subversive agencies, making use of Cuban counterrevolutionaries, U.S. citizen and all kind of corrupted individuals, inside the country as well as abroad, without taking into consideration the victims that would result from these actions.

With this purpose, they have provided the participants with a great number of weapons, explosives, technical means of transportation and communication for the accomplishment of their plans.

These are some of the connoted and proved facts of the numerous subversive activities that the CIA has carried out aimed to the assassination of the leaders of the Revolutionary Government of Cuba.